

Claims

1. A method of determining the contour of a substantially flat workpiece (20, 30, 50), comprising:

applying one or more reference markers to the workpiece  
5 (20, 30, 50);

obtaining at least two overlapping digital photographs (35, 55a-d) of the workpiece (20, 30, 50) from different perspectives;

photogrammetrically processing the photographs (35, 55a-  
10 d) to produce a true-to-scale overall image (56) of the workpiece (20, 30, 50); and

determining the contour of the workpiece (20, 30, 50) from the true-to-scale overall image (56).

15 2. The method according to claim 1, wherein said step of applying the reference markers comprises the step of applying a plurality of length scales (43) distributed over a surface of the workpiece.

20 3. The method according to claim 1, wherein said step of applying the reference markers comprises the step of applying a plurality of position-markers (41, 51) distributed over a surface of the workpiece.

25 4. The method according to claim 1, wherein the workpieces (20, 30, 50) are sheet metal parts of an automobile.

5. The method according to claim 1, further comprising:

30 using a workpiece support in cooperation with the workpiece; and

applying the reference markers to the workpiece support.

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13. A method of establishing a form die for cutting  
5 sheet metal parts, comprising:

10       comparing the contour of the test sheet to a reference  
contour; and

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one or more reference markers for application to the workpiece;

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16. The apparatus according to claim 14, wherein the reference markers are length scales (43).

17. The apparatus according to claim 14, further comprising a workpiece support having the references disposed thereon.

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